STAP cells

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When you do an image search on Google with the keyword ultrasound, the majority of hits are photographs of the fetus in the womb of the mother during pregnancy. This is both an indication of how frequently ultrasonography is performed in the field of obstetrics and gynecology and also an indication that ultrasound devices are already becoming handy imaging devices like an iPhone camera. In fact, we have recently been seeing more and more mothers recording videos of their child on the monitor with their iPhones during ultrasound examinations in obstetrics outpatient clinics. In the past, the media reported that the Hollywood actor Tom Cruise bought a top-of-the-line 4D echography device for his home so that he could film the baby in his wife's womb. In the field of obstetrics, such ultrasound devices, especially 4D diagnostic units that provide stereoscopic images, are fast becoming an essential service to please patients.

While I was watching the televised press conference by Ms H.O., who has been in the spotlight recently over STAP cells, I could not help but think that an author in *Nature*, which was thought to be the furthest publication from the

entertainment world, is now holding a press conference like the best of actresses. Unfortunately, the field of science is now entering a realm where research results are affected by their entertainment value. What is happening is that journal editors are looking for socially popular research that will appeal to the mass media, and authors are responding by trying to get results that will have a greater impact. As I mentioned above, 4D echography is fast becoming common in the field of obstetrics. In fact, we are seeing more and more articles describing visualization of fetal diseases on 4D echography in the *Journal of Medical Ultrasonics*. I am not quite sure whether 4D echography is really useful for diagnosis of disorders, but there is no doubt that being able to see the baby in the womb stereoscopically has a big impact on the mother. The fact is that journal editors will be publishing more and more of these papers. This goes to show that not even science is immune to the tide of the times. Perhaps the emergence of 4D ultrasound and STAP cells was predestined to happen. Of course, I do not imagine we will see a fabrication of research results in the case of 4D ultrasound.

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